

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 313562
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 PRS-01 H-02 SSM-05
DHA-02 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 PA-02 L-03 DODE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 /092 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:EOJONES:RGH

APPROVED BY NEA/P:EOJONES

S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

SSM - MR. MC ANDREW

NEA - MS. GRIFFIN

NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER

NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY

-----302139Z 036720 /73

O 302108Z DEC 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 313562

USMISSION SINAI

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
CINCEUR

UNCLAS STATE 313562

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL, CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - DECEMBER 30

1. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION AT THE NOON BRIEFING, DEC. 30,
THE SPOKESMAN READ THE FOLLOWING GUIDANCE WHICH HAD BEEN
PROVIDED:

"WE HAVE NOTED THE PRESS REPORTS YOU REFER TO. WE HAVE
ALSO NOTED MANY PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT
RECENTLY BY OFFICIALS OF THE VARIOUS PARTIES. AS HAS BEEN
TRUE IN THE PAST, WE ARE SIMPLY NOT GOING TO COMMENT ON
THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES INVOLVED."

2. THE FOLLOWING CONTINGENCY GUIDANCE HAD BEEN PROVIDED
TO THE SPOKESMAN PRIOR TO DECEMBER 30 BRIEFING. HE
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 313562

RECEIVED NO QUESTIONS ON THESE SUBJECTS:

-- CLOSING OF AN-NAHAR (BEIRUT NEWSPAPER):

Q. WHAT IS YOUR COMMENT ON THE REPORT THAT MR. TUEINI OF
THE BEIRUT NEWSPAPER AN-NAHAR IS GOING TO ACCEDE TO
SYRIAN DEMANDS, KEEP HIS NEWSPAPER CLOSED AND MOVE
PERSONALLY TO LIVE IN PARIS?

A. I CAN ONLY REITERATE WHAT MR. FUNSETH SAID THE OTHER
DAY: THAT U.S. SUPPORT FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF FREEDOM OF
THE PRESS IS WELL KNOWN AND THAT WE REGRET VIOLATIONS OF
THIS PRINCIPLE WHEREVER THEY OCCUR. AS FOR THE REACTION
OF MR. TUEINI, YOU SHOULD ADDRESS YOUR QUESTIONS ON THAT
SUBJECT TO HIM.

Q. DO YOU THINK THAT THIS INDICATES THAT EFFECTIVE
SYRIAN CONTROL OF THE LEBANESE PRESS HAS NOW BEEN

ESTABLISHED, AS MR. TUEINI'S QUOTED STATEMENTS SEEM TO INDICATE?

A. THAT'S A SPECULATIVE QUESTION I'M NOT GOING TO COMMENT ON.

Q. BOB FUNSETH SAID THE OTHER DAY THAT THE UNITED STATES "IS LOOKING INTO" VIOLATIONS OF FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN LEBANON. WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF YOUR INVESTIGATION?

A. I THINK THAT REMARK REFERRED TO THE ALLEGED CLOSING OF U.S. NEWS AGENCIES. I UNDERSTAND THAT THESE HAVE REOPENED.

Q. HAVE YOU NOW COMMUNICATED WITH THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT AND OTHER GOVERNMENTS ABOUT THIS SUPPRESSION OF THE BEIRUT PRESS? YOU SAID THE OTHER DAY THAT OUR EMBASSY WAS "LOOKING INTO THE MATTER."
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 313562

A. WE ASKED OUR EMBASSY TO CHECK THE FACTS OF THE SITUATION AND THEY REPLIED THAT THE FACTS WERE ESSENTIALLY AS REPORTED IN THE PRESS. I WOULD REITERATE WHAT BOB FUNSETH SAID THE OTHER DAY -- THAT THIS IS BASICALLY A LEBANESE MATTER AND IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR THE U.S. TO COMMENT PUBLICLY ON THE SUBJECT BEYOND WHAT I HAVE ALREADY SAID.

-- PLO OFFICE IN WASHINGTON:

Q. IS IT TRUE, AS REPORTED IN THE PRESS, THAT THE U.S. HAS AGREED TO THE OPENING OF A PLO OFFICE IN WASHINGTON?

A. AS I EXPLAINED SOME DAYS AGO FROM THIS PODIUM, NO U.S. GOVERNMENT PERMISSION OR AGREEMENT IS REQUIRED FOR THE OPENING OF A PLO OFFICE IN WASHINGTON AS LONG AS THE REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS OF THE FOREIGN AGENTS REGISTRATION ACT ARE COMPLIED WITH AND THOSE EMPLOYED BY THE OFFICE ARE LEGALLY ENTITLED TO RESIDE IN THE UNITED

STATES, EITHER BECAUSE OF THEIR PERMANENT RESIDENT ALIEN OR CITIZENSHIP STATUS OR BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN ADMITTED TO THE UNITED STATES WITH THE PROPER VISA DOCUMENTATION.

Q. MR. JIRYIS, THE PLO REPRESENTATIVE WHO VISITED THE UNITED STATES IN RECENT WEEKS HAS REPORTEDLY SAID THAT HE HAS OVERCOME TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION DIFFICULTIES AND THEREFORE EXPECTS TO COME TO THE UNITED STATES AGAIN NEXT MONTH TO OPEN THE OFFICE. IS THIS TRUE?

A. MR. JIRYIS, AS WELL AS ANY OTHER FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PLO WOULD HAVE TO APPLY FOR A VISA IN THE NORMAL MANNER PRIOR TO TRAVELING TO THE UNITED STATES. UNDER SECTION 212(A)28 OF THE IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT, A U.S. CONSUL RECEIVING ANY SUCH UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 313562

APPLICATION WOULD HAVE TO REFER IT TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE FOR A WAIVER. WE HAVE RECEIVED NO SUCH APPLICATION FROM MR. JIRYIS.

Q. WOULD HE BE GIVEN A WAIVER IF HE APPLIED?

A. NO DETERMINATION CAN BE MADE UNTIL AN APPLICATION IS RECEIVED.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE ALLEGATIONS THAT MR. JIRYIS GAVE FALSE INFORMATION IN HIS PREVIOUS VISA APPLICATION?

A. IF HE DID SO, THIS WOULD BE CONSIDERED TOGETHER WITH OTHER FACTS CONCERNING ANY NEW APPLICATION. I REALLY CAN'T SAY MORE THAN THAT. THE DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND JUSTICE WOULD TAKE ALL CIRCUMSTANCES INTO CONSIDERATION IN CONSIDERING ANY FURTHER APPLICATION.

ROBINSON

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